

2. RECOVERY OF A RINGED TIGER!

Last March I had some guests at my farm near Kichha (Kumaon terai) for a shoot. One of the tigers shot was found to have a collar of twisted iron wire round its neck (two rounds of wire with a loop in which the loose end of the wire was secured). The tiger, a male measuring 8 ft. 7 in. between pegs, was in good condition and quite wild. When followed up after being wounded, it charged our elephants viciously and put them to flight before being shot. The collar was quite loose indicating that the animal was not very young when it escaped from captivity. The tiger had perhaps escaped from a circus, but curiously we did not hear of any such escape, or of any circus camping within 20 miles of the farm in the last year or so. My brother mentioned that he had read in the Lucknow *Pioneer* of a tiger escaping from a circus camping at Mainpuri a few months back. A letter to the editor of the newspaper has remained unreplied. Mainpuri is about 180 miles (290 km.) from Kichha in a straight line. Do you think that the Mainpuri tiger could be the one shot on the farm? The distance and the wildness of the tiger are perhaps against the assumption.

464, BEHARIPUR,
BAREILLY, U.P.,
July 26, 1960.

C. M. CHAUDHRI,
I.F.S. (Retired)

[The Editor of *The Pioneer* has been unable to trace any reference to a report of the tiger at any time between July 1959 and February 1960. Can any reader give us more information about this tiger?—EDS.]

3. SOME NOTES ON THE GOLDEN CAT, *FELIS TEMMINCKI*
VIGORS & HORSFIELD

(With two plates)

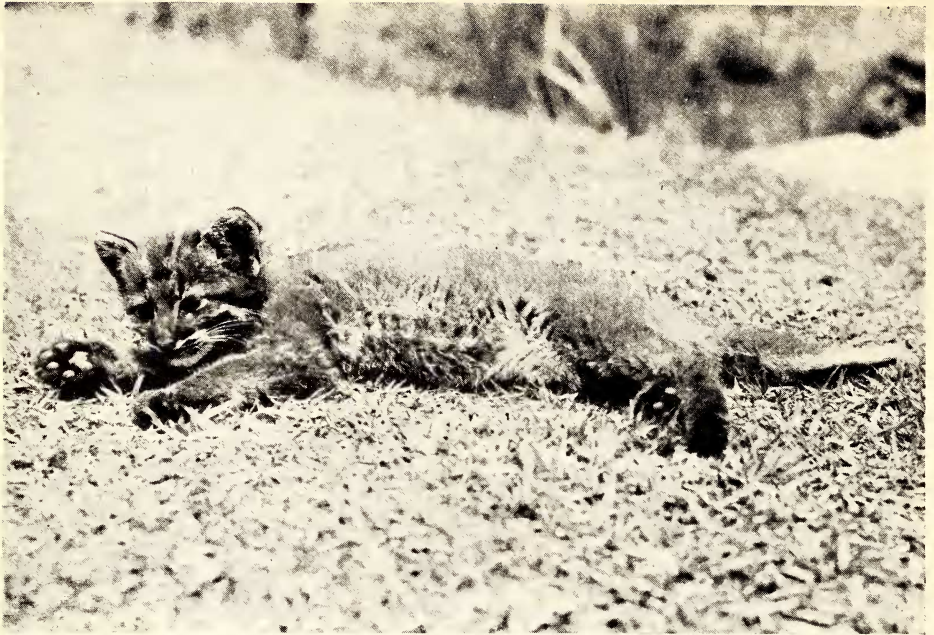
This beautiful cat is found in Nepal, north-east India, Burma, and south-east Asia down to Sumatra; Tibet, Szechuan, and (?) upper Burma; and southern China. Ellerman & Morrison-Scott list three subspecies in these three geographical areas respectively: *F. t. temmincki*, *F. t. tristis*, and *F. t. dominicanorum*.



Felis temmincki temmincki

Perhaps the most handsome and brilliantly coloured of all the smaller cats

Photo : E. P. Gee



As a kitten, he was dark brown and fluffy



About three-quarters grown. His size can be gauged from the tennis ball he is retrieving

F. temmincki is extremely variable in coloration, and the typical race *F. t. temmincki* varies from very dark brown (even black) to rusty red or chestnut, ochreous-tawny, and grey. There are prominent striped markings on the face and cheeks, with faint markings on the chest and under parts. The tail is dark above and whitish below. This is a large cat, the length of an adult male being 4 ft. 2 in. (1.27 m.) including the tail.

This cat has very seldom been observed in the live state. One was seen and shot at Maymyo over a calf it had killed, and another was speared at Victoria Point, Tenasserim, while feeding on a buffalo calf. A pair of them were shot at Shilingkhet (also in Burma?) while feeding on a buffalo calf. In the Lushai Hills (of Assam) it is said to live among rocks, while in the Mishmi Hills (of N. E. F. A.) the female is said to lie up in hollow trees with her two young ones.

Sterndale quotes Hodgson to the effect that his first specimen 'was caught in a tree by some hunters in the midst of an exceedingly dense forest. Though only just taken it bore confinement very tranquilly, and gave evident signs of a tractable disposition, but manifested high courage, for the approach of a huge Bhotea dog to its cage excited in it symptoms of wrath only, not of fear.'

E. O. Shebbeare tells me that A. W. Pullan once kept a Golden Cat in captivity, and eventually presented it to the London Zoo where it died of feline distemper. It was said to be very tame, and was 'grey with darker mottling'.

In April 1960, while in Goalpara town in western Assam, I found a tiny kitten in the shop of an animal dealer, and instantly recognised it as a kitten of *F. t. temmincki*. After much bargaining I acquired it. I was told by the dealer that it and two others had been brought from the Garo Hills near by in February. They must have been found when very young indeed as this one had been in the dealer's possession for a month and was still very tiny. The other two had been sent to Calcutta but had both died on the way.

I took the kitten to my house in Upper Shillong, where he immediately made himself at home both inside the house and also all over the garden. Tishi, as he was called, proved to be remarkably tame and intelligent. He quickly came to know the servants and all the windows and doors of the rooms. He would come instantly when called, even without a chance of getting food, and would follow me everywhere. Each time I passed a tree he would leave me, dash up the tree almost to the top, dash down again and catch me up in time to do a repeat performance at the next tree. He